

Places Where We Play, Gather & Learn



Above: Children gather at the Spring Social held on March 24, 2001 to kickoff the Near Northwest planning process.

It is a nice comfort to know that the places we hold close to our heart have touched many generations of San Antonians and will continue to have a positive affect on generations to come.

– Josh Yost, Woodlawn Lake Neighborhood

Introduction

Woodlawn Lake Park is a unique asset that serves as a focal point and a source of unity for the Near Northwest Community. The significance of Woodlawn Lake and the greenspace surrounding it is most visible on the 4th of July when thousands of spectators from all over the city gather to watch the traditional fireworks display. It is during any given weekend, however, that the true importance of this park to the community becomes apparent by all of the families that gather to enjoy it.

The community is interested in involving more residents in area issues and activities, such as neighborhood association membership, code compliance monitoring, park maintenance and acquisition, education and youth involvement.

The Places Where We Play, Gather and Learn chapter focuses on community facilities, such as parks, schools and community centers. Issues related to safety, community involvement and appearance, education and outreach also are included in the chapter.

Near Northwest Community Plan



Gathering at the Woodlawn Lake Park Pavilion

Goal 6 - Open Space and Recreational Facilities and Programs

Offer more recreational activities and community centers that can provide safe environments with a variety of opportunities for all ages.

Objective 6.1: Open Space Development

Enhance existing parks through better maintenance and additional facility improvements, as well as acquiring and developing additional park space.

Action Steps:

6.1.1 Have each neighborhood association take an inventory of potential pocket park opportunities among vacant properties within their boundaries and work to adopt these properties as parks.

6.1.2 Encourage better maintenance and request functional improvements of existing park space.

- *Look to provide additional picnic tables, benches, grills and trees.*



Historic buildings at Woodlawn Lake Park



Fishing at Woodlawn Lake Park

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: Property owners, NAs, Bexar County Land Trust

Funding Sources: Donations, Grants, NICP

Timeline: Short (under 1 year)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Parks & Recreation Dept., NAs, Environmental organizations, Businesses, Merchants Assn(s)

Funding Sources: Volunteer time, NICP, CoSA

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6.1.3 Explore the possibility of developing additional walking/running/bicycle trails in community parks.

- *Consider a walking/running trail around Lee's Creek Park.*
- *Implement current plans for a bike lane around Woodlawn Lake Park.*
- *Consider replacing the current asphalt surface for the Woodlawn Lake Park walking/running path with a substance that is safe for children, is ADA accessible and has a lower physical impact on walkers and runners (more shock absorbent).*

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Parks & Recreation and Public Works Depts., City Officials, Walking, running, & bicycle clubs

Funding Sources: TEA-21 funds, CoSA

6.1.4 Look into adding playground equipment at neighborhood and community parks.

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Parks & Recreation Dept., NAs, Area businesses

Funding Sources: Volunteer time, NICP, Grants, Foundations, Businesses

6.1.5 Explore the conversion of drainage areas, such as Martinez Creek, into landscaped park space, including trees.

Timeline: Mid (3 - 5 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Parks & Recreation and Public Works Depts., Bexar County Master Gardeners, Environmental organizations

Funding Sources: Donations, NICP, Businesses

6.1.6 Establish a “community garden” as a multi-generational gathering place in which area youths can learn about growing techniques from the planning area’s more experienced gardeners.

Timeline: Mid (3 – 5 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Parks & Recreation Dept. and Arborist's Office, Bexar County Master Gardeners, Environmental organizations, Religious institutions, Schools

Funding Sources: Volunteer time,

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Sailboats at Woodlawn Lake Park

Objective 6.2: Woodlawn Lake Park

Improve and add park facilities and amenities.

Action Steps:

6.2.1 Investigate the implementation of additional recreational opportunities at Woodlawn Lake Park, including paddle boats, hosting concerts and/or plays and additional organized activities for children.

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Parks & Recreation Dept., Community theaters (i.e. San Pedro Playhouse & Josephine Theater), Musicians (including orchestral and choir groups, all types of bands and soloists), Dance groups

Funding Sources: Donations

6.2.2 Renovate Woodlawn Lake Park Gym (also see Action Step 10.1.4).

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Parks & Recreation Dept.

Funding Sources: CoSA, 1999 Bond funds



Woodlawn Lake Park Gym

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6.2.3 Explore opportunities for enhancements related to increased safety and comfort for park visitors.

- *Add more trees and benches.*
- *Reduce speeds on streets adjacent to park.*
- *Add more signs displaying park rules.*
- *Create a regular park lighting maintenance schedule.*

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Parks & Recreation and Public Works Depts., Arborist's Office, Environmental organizations, Volunteer groups

Funding Sources: NICP, CoSA

Objective 6.3: Community/Recreational Facilities

Investigate opportunities to enhance existing facilities in need of renovation and develop additional facilities identified as needed in the community.

Action Steps:

6.3.1 Explore the development of additional public recreational facilities within the community targeted at, but not to be solely utilized by, area youths, such as additional basketball courts, tennis courts, and swimming pools.

- *Include CoSA Parks & Recreation Department recreational programs and activities in the Near Northwest Newsletter (also see Objective 10.2).*
- *Explore the creation of more recreational athletic opportunities for youth and adults (basketball, volleyball, soccer, softball, tennis, etc.)*



Coolcrest miniature golf course on Fredericksburg Road has long been a recreation destination for residents

Timeline: Mid (3-5 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Parks & Recreation Dept., NAs, Religious institutions, Schools

Funding Sources: San Antonio Spurs Foundation, CoSA, Grants



Woodlawn Lake Park swimming pool

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Timeline: Long (6+ years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Library Dept.,
NAs, SAISD

Funding Sources: CoSA Library
Dept., Foundations, SAISD, Bond Issue

6.3.2 Explore increasing accessibility to library resources.

- *Consider using a facility-sharing strategy with an area school to accommodate a public library.*

Timeline: Long (6+ years)

Lead Partner: YMCA, Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: United Way, CoSA
Parks & Recreation and Cultural Affairs
Depts., Spurs Foundation, City Officials

Potential Funding Sources: CoSA,
United Way, Foundations, Corporations,
Businesses

6.3.3 Investigate building a YMCA/community center or adapting an existing structure, such as the Woodlawn Theater or the Joe Ward Center, as a multi-generational recreation center.

- *Offer arts and other recreational programs for all ages, including after-school programs for students geared towards the prevention of gang activity (also see Objective 8.1).*

Goal 7 - Community Appearance and Safety

Transform the community into one that is physically appealing in terms of aesthetics and safety.

Objective 7.1: Code Compliance

Increase community awareness and encourage proactive involvement in code compliance issues.



Streetscape in Monticello Park



Illegal dumping has been identified as a problem in the Near Northwest Community

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Action Steps:

7.1.1 Form a geographically representative Code Compliance Committee within the Near Northwest Coalition.

- *Identify and report code compliance violations.*
- *Strengthen the working relationship with the CoSA Code Compliance Department.*

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partners: CoSA Code Compliance Dept.

Funding Sources: Minimal funding

7.1.2 Task the Code Compliance Committee with:

- *Addressing code compliance as a standing business item in neighborhood association meetings,*
- *Providing “friendly reminder” forms to neighborhood associations,*
- *Arranging training from the CoSA Code Compliance Department for each neighborhood association within the planning area,*
- *Pushing for additional fines and required clean-up by graffiti offenders, and*
- *Creating graffiti powers of attorney. (Anytime a building is tagged, the owner has given permission to paint it.)*

Timeline: Short (On-going)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Code Compliance, Fire, Neighborhood Action and Police Depts., City Officials, NAs

Funding Sources: CoSA, Code compliance violators

7.1.3 Inform and challenge local groups to assist with clean-up efforts in the community, particularly in the areas of alley maintenance, “off-curb storage”, animal control and the removal of “junk cars”.

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partners: Schools, Youth groups, Area businesses, Corporations, CoSA Code Compliance Dept., NAs

Funding Sources: Area businesses (i.e. hardware stores, etc), Larger corporations



Graffiti-covered garage in the Los Angeles Heights/Keystone area

Near Northwest Community Plan

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition and CoSA Graffiti Abatement Program

Partnerships: CoSA Code Compliance and Police Depts., Restitution Program, Area businesses, Schools

Funding Sources: District 7 Graffiti Fund, Graffiti Abatement Program, NICP, Area businesses, Volunteers

7.1.4 Expand and designate additional corridors/target areas for graffiti removal within the Near Northwest Community. Inventory the new target areas. The target areas would include but be not limited to:

- *Bandera Road corridor targeting the area between Texas Avenue and Cheryl Avenue.*
- *Elmendorf Avenue from Fredericksburg Road to Kentucky Avenue.*

Timeline: Short (On-going)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Animal Control Division, NAs, Veterinarians

Funding Sources: CoSA Animal Control Division

7.1.5 Increase efforts to control the stray animal population.

- *Encourage leash law enforcement.*
- *Establish better working relationships with Animal Control Division staff members.*



Community members planting a tree

Objective 7.2: Aesthetics & Clean-up

Focus on maintenance and creative community-based efforts to enhance the community's appearance.

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: Bexar County Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, Environmental organizations, Youth volunteer organizations, Community service workers

Funding Sources: NICP

7.2.1 Develop a landscape master plan that includes areas targeted for tree planting and designates clean-up days in the community.

- *Make a special effort to involve community youth.*

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- 7.2.2** Submit applications for the CoSA Neighborhood Action Department Neighborhood Sweep process within the community.

Timeline: Short (On-going)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Neighborhood Action Dept., NAs, City Officials

Funding Sources: No cost

- 7.2.3** Hold vacant property owners accountable for maintenance.
- *Explore options, such as fencing, to prevent illegal dumping on these properties.*

Timeline: Short (On-going)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Code Compliance and Police Depts., NAs, City Officials

Funding Sources: Minimal cost

Objective 7.3: Safety

Increase safety through stronger surveillance by the CoSA Police Department and area residents.

Action Steps:

- 7.3.1** Increase the police presence in the entire Near Northwest Community.
- *Work with SAFFE officers to adjust their hours to meet specific needs in the community.*
 - *Increased police bicycle patrols as staffing levels increase.*
 - *Install police call boxes.*
 - *Increase Cellular On Patrol (COP) activity throughout the planning area.*



SAFFE Officers

Timeline: Short (immediate)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Police Dept. SAFFE Officers, City Officials, NAs, Religious institutions

Funding Sources: Minimal cost

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Timeline: Short (1 or 2 years)

Lead Partner: NAs

Partnerships: CoSA Fire Dept.

Funding Sources: CoSA Public Works and Fire Depts., Neighborhood fundraisers

7.3.2 Encourage the CoSA Public Works and Fire Departments to place blue reflectors in the center of streets denoting the location of fire hydrants.

Goal 8 - Community Education

Increase educational opportunities for all ages throughout the community.



Historic Jefferson High School

Objective 8.1: Youth and Young Adult Education

Provide educational and life skills resources for young community residents while encouraging their involvement in the community.

Action Steps:

8.1.1 Develop a Near Northwest Community Youth Commission to address issues of concern to area youth (particularly those issues addressed in the plan).

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partners: Alamo Workforce Development Inc., City Year

Partnerships: Area businesses, SAISD, NAs, Religious institutions, Area colleges, Schools

Funding Sources: Minimal cost

8.1.2 Direct neighborhood associations to dedicate one annual meeting to area high school and middle school involvement.

- *Area school councils and class officers could develop presentations or activities.*

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partners: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: School principals, Student officers, NAs

Funding Sources: Minimal cost

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8.1.3 Develop a program sponsored by Life Directions to mentor “at risk” students and help them develop life skills.

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition, Life Directions

Partnerships: CoSA Community Initiatives Dept. and Better Jobs Office, Alamo Area Aerospace Academy, Area school principals, HS Alumni, Students

Funding Sources: Grants

8.1.4 Develop a program that incorporates education and job-related knowledge for youth to help prepare them for their future endeavors.

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partners: Alamo Workforce Development Inc.

Partnerships: Area businesses, SAISD, CoSA Community Initiatives Dept., City Year, San Antonio area Chambers of Commerce

Funding Sources: Area businesses, CoSA, Alamo Workforce Development Inc.

8.1.5 Enhance the structure and increase the number of academic enrichment activities offered in Jefferson High School’s after school challenge program.

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Community Initiatives and Parks & Recreation Depts., Area school principals, HS alumni, Students

Funding Sources: Grants

8.1.6 Invite COSTEP (Council for South Texas Economic Progress) to establish services for planning area students, i.e. funding for higher education, goal setting, etc.

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: COSTEP, Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: Area school principals, San Antonio Education Partnership, Area colleges, Students, Religious institutions

Funding Sources: Chrysler Corporation

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Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: CoSA Community Initiatives and Parks & Recreation Depts., Area school principals, HS alumni, Students

Funding Sources: Grants, Foundations

8.1.7 Develop a mentoring program sponsored by Jefferson and Edison High School students to tutor lower grade level students in classes in which they need assistance.

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: COSTEP, Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: Area school career services offices, SAC (CAPHSS and CAPCBC Programs – see Appendix E), Area colleges, Students

Funding Sources: SAISD, Area colleges

8.1.8 Improve relationships with area colleges and universities.

- *Keep local high school students informed about higher education options in San Antonio.*
- *Facilitate college communities' roles as part of the larger community.*

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: COSTEP, Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: Area school career services offices, SAC (CAPHSS and CAPCBC Programs – see Appendix E), Area colleges, Students

Funding Sources: SAISD, Area colleges

8.1.9 Promote an "Alumni Day" at area middle and high schools as an opportunity to:

- *Put interested middle and high school students in contact with college students enrolled at local institutions of higher learning.*
- *Enhance the school/alumni relationship.*

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Objective 8.2: Education for Adults

Increase usage of local educational resources by community members.



Community residents working at the July Plan Writing Conference

- 8.2.1** Develop stronger relationships and communications with San Antonio Independent School District School Board members to sustain a constant flow of information about what is happening both in the community and with the School District.

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: School Board members, NAs

Funding Sources: Minimal cost

- 8.2.2** Investigate using Jefferson High School as a community college on evenings and weekends, featuring a wide variety of educational and recreational courses.

Timeline: Short (1-2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: SAISD, SAC, Southwest School of Art & Craft, St. Mary's University, Peacock Center, CoSA Cultural Affairs and Parks & Recreation Depts., Religious institutions, Alamo Area Community College District

Funding Sources: United Way, Foundations, Corporations, Businesses

- 8.2.3** Explore opportunities for the development of community high-tech facilities to enhance public access to computers.

- Increased computer access would promote additional learning opportunities and improve outreach for community events, such as neighborhood association meetings, through e-mail, etc.*

Timeline: Mid (3-5 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: SAISD, CoSA Library Dept., Internet providers, Texas-based computer producers

Funding Sources: Donations (financial and computer equipment), Volunteer time, Grants, Texas-based computer producers

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Area bicyclist

Timeline: Mid (3 – 5 years)

Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: Local hospitals, Doctors' offices, CoSA MetroHealth, Religious institutions, WIC

Funding Sources: Grants, Foundations

Goal 9 - Community Health and Wellness

Improve community health.

Objective 9.1: Health Programs

Provide the educational and professional medical resources to help inform and provide needed medical care for community residents.

Action Steps:

9.1.1 Develop additional health programs or health fairs on a regular basis to educate the community about health-related issues.

- *Investigate sponsoring a monthly health clinic at Jefferson Village.*
- *Offer a clinic focused on young mothers.*



*Volunteers at the Woodlawn Lake Park Fourth of July celebration
Photo by Stan Waghalter*

Timeline: Short (on-going)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: Schools, Religious institutions, Businesses, League of Women Voters

Goal 10- Community Building

Increase community involvement and civic participation.

Objective 10.1: Community Participation and Events

Increase voter registration and attract new neighborhood association membership through organized campaigns and events.

Action Steps:

10.1.1 Distribute nonpartisan voter information and registration cards on elections, issues and candidates at every neighborhood association meeting.

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10.1.2 Dramatically increase membership in area neighborhood associations.

- *Explore directing new membership towards supporting the various Near NW Coalition Committees established for the purpose of plan implementation.*
- *Potentially create new neighborhood associations and/or establish new boundaries.*

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition, Community leaders

Partnerships: CoSA Planning Dept., Neighborhood Resource Center

Funding Sources: Minimal cost

10.1.3 Establish the July 4th Celebration at Woodlawn as the official city celebration. Use the event to attract involvement in area neighborhood associations and general community involvement efforts. Work to address the parking and traffic problems (also see Action Step 5.3.2).

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Partner: CoSA

Partners: Near NW Coalition, Religious institutions, VIA, SAISD

Funding Sources: Area businesses, Vendors, CoSA

10.1.4 Host a multi-cultural holiday party in the Woodlawn Lake Gym, potentially featuring theatrical and/or musical entertainment, as well as a display of artwork from area school children and holiday light illumination of the park and the gym (also see Action Step 10.3.1).

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Partner: CoSA Parks & Recreation Dept.

Partners: Near NW Coalition, SAISD

Funding Sources: Area businesses, Vendors, CoSA

10.1.5 Coordinate with all Near Northwest Community neighborhood associations to hold more community-wide events, such as a 5,000 meter walk/run.

Timeline: Mid (3 – 5 years)

Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: Area businesses, Jefferson-Woodlawn Lake CDC, Running and walking clubs

Funding Sources: Volunteer time, Sponsors

Near Northwest Community Plan



Information booth at the March 24, 2001 Near NW Spring Social

Timeline: Short (immediate)

Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: Residents

Funding Sources: Grants, Revenue from community events (5K run, etc.)

Timeline: Short (1 – 2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: Area school principals, Students, Religious institutions, Businesses

Funding Sources: Grants

Objective 10.2: Near Northwest Newsletter

Develop a quarterly newsletter to enhance communication between residents and businesses.

Action Steps:

10.2.1 Develop a Near Northwest Coalition Newsletter Committee.

- *Include programs, activities (with an emphasis on encouraging youth involvement), and other upcoming events, etc.*
- *Include plan implementation information, such as the indicators developed by the Planning Task Force and regular updates on the status of plan projects.*

10.2.2 Develop a strategy to distribute the newsletter at area schools, religious institutions, businesses, etc.

- *Create specific places in each neighborhood for newsletter pick-up.*
- *Develop a master mailing or "resource list".*
- *Distribute electronically.*



Children's dance group at the Near NW Spring Social.

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Objective 10.3: Celebration of Diversity

Foster a heightened awareness of the culture associated with the different ethnic and religious groups in the community.



Vendors and spectators at the Near NW Spring Social

Action Steps:

10.3.1 Explore the incorporation of representation from area religious and cultural organizations at the holiday party (also see Action Step 10.1.4) or at a cultural fair.

- *Could include a multi-cultural market (a wide variety of vendors), performances displaying cultural traditions (games, dances, folk art, traditional crafts, etc.)*

Timeline: Short (1-2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: Religious and cultural organizations, CoSA Cultural Affairs and Parks and Rec. Dept., Area businesses, Museums, UTSA Institute of Texan Cultures

Funding Sources: Area businesses, Religious and cultural organizations, CoSA

10.3.2 Provide more educational opportunities to increase awareness of other cultures and religions to create a stronger sense of the benefits of diversity and multi-culturalism.

- *Approach SAISD about providing a greater emphasis on teaching about other cultures and religions in the curriculum of all grade levels.*
- *Explore the possibility of providing for evening classes at area schools/community centers for adults on a variety of topics related to religion and culture.*

Timeline: Short (1-2 years)

Lead Partner: Near NW Coalition

Partnerships: Religious and cultural organizations, CoSA Cultural Affairs Dept., SAISD, Peacock Center, UTSA Institute of Texan Cultures

Funding Sources: SAISD, Community centers

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